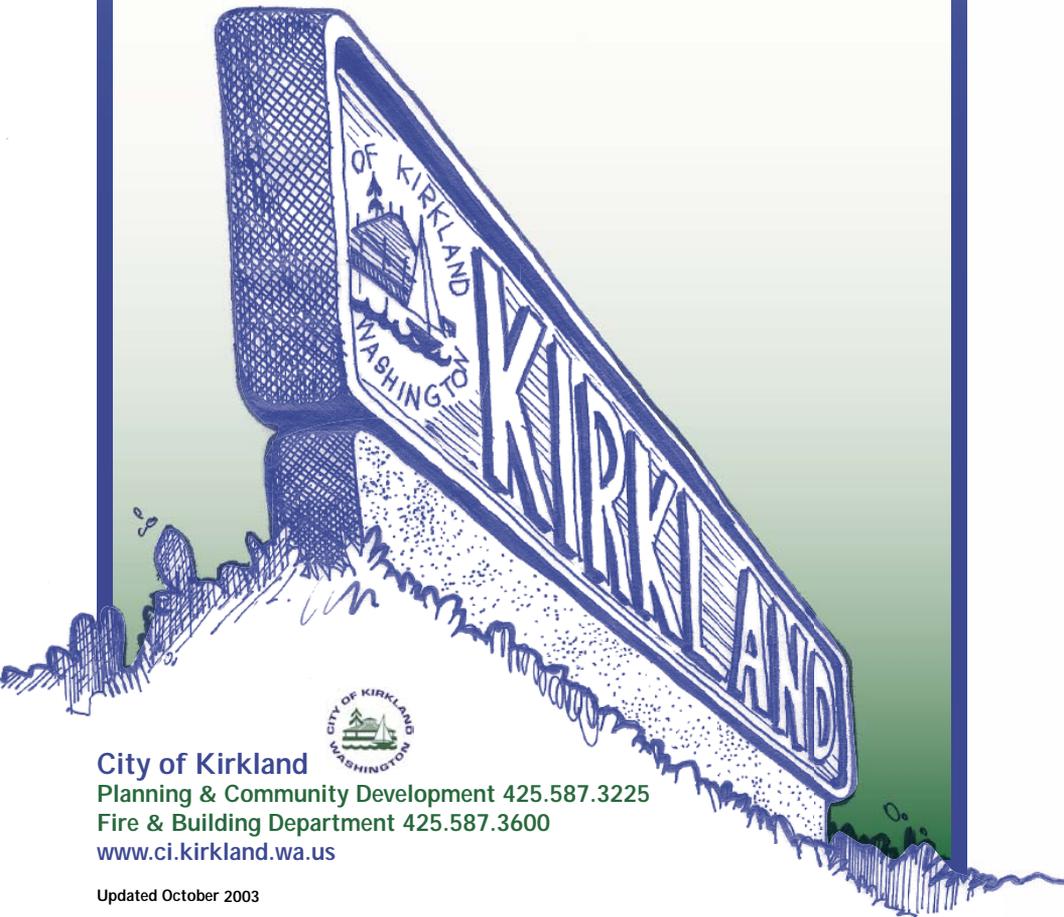


# SIGNS

## A Guide To Signs In Kirkland



City of Kirkland

Planning & Community Development 425.587.3225

Fire & Building Department 425.587.3600

[www.ci.kirkland.wa.us](http://www.ci.kirkland.wa.us)

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# A Guide to Signs in Kirkland

## The Purpose of This Brochure

This brochure provides a quick and easy-to-understand information for sign companies and applicants who want to build signs in Kirkland.

### Topics include:

1. How to use the Sign Code (Chapter 100 of the Zoning Ordinance)
2. Design principles for signs
3. Master Sign Plans
4. Prohibited Signs and Placement
5. Uniform Sign Code/ Uniform Building Code Issues

## How To Use the Code

The Kirkland Zoning Code contains the Sign Code. The purpose of the Sign Code is to promote:

- Commercial communications that accommodate the need of the business community to convey information to the public.
- The protection and enhancement of the visual character and identity of the community by the thoughtful placement, size and design of signs; and
- The elimination of clutter and visual distraction.

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# Erecting or Relocating a Sign

*This section shows you the steps for erecting or relocating a sign.*

## Determine your **sign category**

- Step 1** Identify the type of activity that occurs or will occur in your building.
- Step 2** Determine the zoning for the property by consulting the Zoning Map or by contacting a planner at City Hall.
- Step 3** With the information from Steps 1 and 2, go to Table 1 (pages 9 and 10) and determine if your sign category is A, B, C, D, or E.

## Determine your maximum allowable **sign area**

- Step 4** Determine the **LINEAR FRONTAGE** of your property adjacent or parallel to all open, improved public rights-of-way or public access easements, and in a few zones, I-405.
- Step 5** Using the **SIGN AREA CHART** presented in section 100.45 of the Zoning Code, determine the sign area that you are allowed based on your sign category (A, B, C, D, E or F) and the linear frontage. This is the total sign area allowed your property.
- Step 6** Each individually licensed business within a multi-use complex is allowed 30 square feet. In a multi-use complex an individual business may request additional sign area from the sign area amount determined in Step 5 with written approval from the property owner.
- Step 7** Determine if you qualify for **SIGN AREA BONUSES** by using the criteria presented in Section 100.45 of the Zoning Code.

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# Erecting or Relocating a Sign, cont'd

## Determine your sign type

**Step 8** Use the Sign Category column on Table 1 and Section 100.30 of the Zoning Code, to determine which type of signs are allowed (i.e., wall mounted, monument, etc.). Additional information on exact sign heights and dimensions can be found in Section 100.65, and Plates 12 through 13A of the Zoning Code.

## Determine the number of signs that you are allowed

**Step 9** This information can be found in Section 100.35 of the Zoning Code

## Get a sign permit

**Step 10** Got to the Building Department for the sign permit application forms. Fill out the form and attach all required information (see last section of this brochure entitled "Uniform Sign Code/Uniform Building Code Issues"). The Building Department will call you when your permit is ready to be picked up.

- Planning Department Sign Permit

If you are proposing a reface of an existing sign that is not a non-conforming sign and no structural alterations are involved, you may apply for a Planning department sign permit. Stop by the Planning Department counter for a form. There is no fee involved for this review.

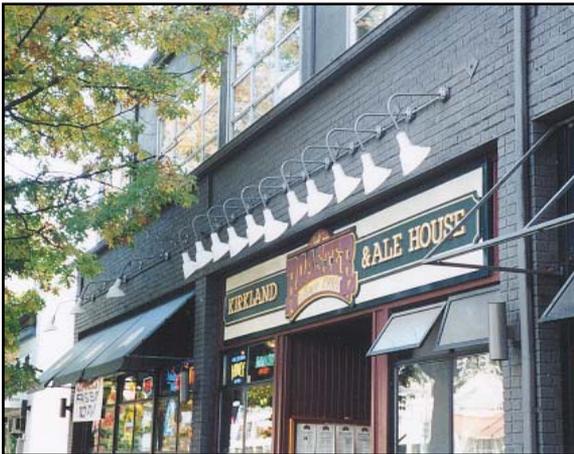
- Miscellaneous Information

Thematic flags, banners, or pennants that are complementary to and normally associated with the character of a specific location are allowed. Such flags, banners or pennants, however, may not include commercial or advertising messages.

# Design Principles



All signs should be building-mounted or below 12 feet in height if ground mounted.



Signs with front lighting and down lighting are recommended. Internally-lit, plastic faced, cabinet signs are discouraged. In some neighborhoods (i.e. Downtown and Juanita), they are already prohibited. When they are used, opaque sign faces with translucent letters are encouraged.

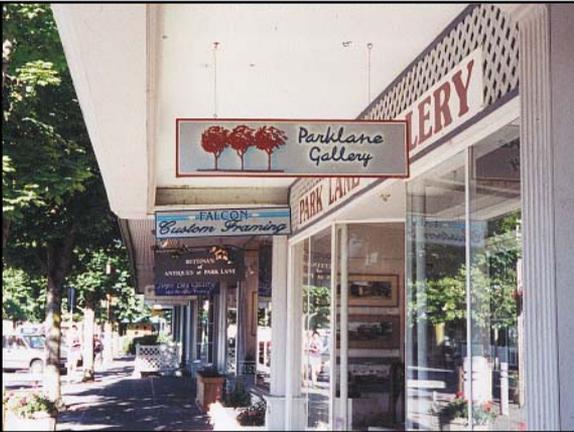


Signs that reflect the building's architecture and style are encouraged.

## Design Principles, cont'd



Building-mounted signs should be an integral part of a building's facade. The location, size, architectural style, and mounting of signs should conform with a building's architecture and not cover up or conflict with its prominent architectural features.



Shingle signs and blade signs hung from canopies or from building facades are encouraged. These are oriented to people on sidewalks, not automobiles.



Signs that reflect the use of the building are encouraged.

## Design Principles, cont'd



Neon signs, sculptural signs, and signs incorporating artwork are encouraged. These signs are important for attracting customers and add interest.

Window signs are counted in sign area.



Substantial landscaping around the base of monument or pedestal signs is encouraged. Ground-mounted signs should feature a substantial base and be integrated with the landscaping and other site features. Mounting supports should reflect the materials and design character of the building or site elements or both.

# Table 1: Sign Categories

Building Type	Zone	Sign Category
Attached or stacked Dwelling Unit	All Zones <sup>1</sup>	A
Detached Dwelling Unit	All Zones <sup>1</sup>	
Church	All Zones <sup>1</sup>	B
Convalescent Center or Nursing Home	All Zones <sup>1</sup> Except PLA 10C <sup>2</sup>	
Hospital Facility	PO Only	
Private Lodge or Club	All Zones <sup>1</sup>	
School or Day Care	All Zones <sup>1</sup>	
Manufacturing	All Zones <sup>1</sup>	
Packaging of Prepared Materials	All Zones <sup>1</sup>	
Recycling Center	All Zones <sup>1</sup>	
Warehouse Storage	All Zones <sup>1</sup>	
Wholesale Printing or Publishing	All Zones <sup>1</sup>	
Wholesale Trade	All Zones <sup>1</sup>	
Office Uses	All Zones <sup>1</sup> Except PLA 10A <sup>2</sup>	D
Office Uses plus Attached or Stacked Dwelling Units	All Zones <sup>1</sup>	
Recreational Activities	All Zones <sup>1</sup>	
Retail: Drugs, Books, Flowers, Liquor, Hardware, Garden, or Fine Art	BN Only	

<sup>1</sup> For all zones that allow corresponding building types

<sup>2</sup> For regulations in planned areas, see the Zoning Code

## Table 1: Sign Categories, cont'd

Building Type	Zone	Sign Category
Banking	All Zones <sup>1</sup> Except PLA 13A <sup>2</sup>	E
Department or Variety Store	All Zones <sup>1</sup>	
Fast Food Restaurant	All Zones <sup>1</sup> Except BN, FCI, FCII and PLA 13A <sup>2</sup>	
Health Club	All Zones <sup>1</sup>	
Hospital	All Zones <sup>1</sup> Except PLA 12 <sup>2</sup> and PO	
Hotel or Motel	All Zones <sup>1</sup> Except FCI and FCII	
Multi-Use Complex	All Zones <sup>1</sup>	
Rental Services	All Zones <sup>1</sup>	
Restaurant or Tavern	All Zones <sup>1</sup> Except FCI, FCII and PLA 13A <sup>2</sup>	
Retail Boat or Vehicle	All Zones <sup>1</sup>	
Retail Entertainment	All Zones <sup>1</sup> Except FCI and FCII	
Retail: Grocery Store, Drug Store, Laundromat, Cleaners, Barbers, Beauty Shop, or Shoe Repair	All Zones <sup>1</sup> Except BN, FCI, FCII, and PLA 13A <sup>2</sup>	
Retail Printing, Publishing or Duplicating	All Zones <sup>1</sup>	
Retail Storage	All Zones <sup>1</sup>	
Service Station	All Zones <sup>1</sup> Except BN, FCI, FCII and PLA 13A <sup>2</sup>	
Fast Food Restaurant	FCI and FCII	F
Hotel or Motel	FCI and FCII	
Retail	FCI and FCII	
Service Station	FCI and FCII	

<sup>1</sup> For all zones that allow corresponding building types

<sup>2</sup> For regulations in planned areas, see the Zoning Code

# Master Sign Plans



**Master Sign Plans allow deviations from the sign code requirements only if certain criteria are met.** A common reason for requesting approval of a Master Sign Plan is additional sign area is needed for the subject property.

## The three criteria are:

1. Use of a consistent design theme to create visual harmony between the sign, buildings, and other components of the subject property. Elements for creating visual harmony may include color, material, location, size, and/or type of sign(s) proposed.
2. The proposed deviations are the minimum necessary to create readable signs from the rights-of-way that provide direct vehicular access, based on traffic speeds and patterns.
3. The signs are in character and orientation with planned and existing uses in the area of the subject property.

## Minor Modifications:

Minor changes to an existing sign plan may be approved if the change does not increase sign area approved in the original Master Sign Plan. In addition, the proposed changes must maintain the design elements integral to the design theme of the original Master Sign Plan



## Master Sign Plans, cont'd



### **Note:**

Large lettering is not necessary for a sign to be readable.

Letters 3-inches high can be read at 120 feet, and 6-inch letters can be read at 300 feet.

### **The City uses broad discretion when approving Master Sign Plans.**

The Design Principles noted in this document are referred to by planners during the review of Master Sign Plans.

Contact the Planning & Community Development Department if you wish to apply for one, but be aware that the processing time can be several months.

# Prohibited Devices and Major Nonconforming Signs



Make sure your sign or property does not include one of the following **prohibited devices!**

- A-frames
- pennants
- banners
- streamers
- private flags
- strings of lights
- flashing lights
- colored lights
- search lights
- flares
- twirlers
- propellers
- wind-activated devices
- balloons, garish or carnival-like elements
- rotating, turning, or moving parts
- the shape, color or working of a traffic sign
- and a few more...

*Consult Section 100.85 of the Zoning Code for a complete listing.*

If your property includes a **Major Nonconforming Sign** and you wish to alter the sign or building, you will probably be asked to remove this sign.

**Major nonconforming signs include:**

- most pole signs
- signs above 12 feet in height
- signs attached to, and extending above, the building roofline
- signs with exposed structural supporting elements such as guy wires or braces
- billboards
- and more...

*See Section 162.35.5 of the Zoning Code for a complete listing.*

**Temporary Commercial Signs**

Temporary Commercial Signs are allowed - they must be entirely attached to a building wall or fence and must be removed at the end of an event, use, or condition.

# Prohibited Signs and Placement



# Uniform Sign Code & Uniform Building Code Issues

## Structural Aspects

Plans must clearly show construction materials, method of construction, dimensions, and means of structural support.

For building-mounted signs, plans must include the weight of the sign and a detailed method of attaching the sign to the building frame.

For ground-mounted signs, plans must include footing dimension, depth of bury, pole type and size, etc. and for signs with an overall height from the ground to the top of the sign over 6 feet in height, completion of the following formulas from the Uniform Building Code (if you are not capable of completing these calculations, then you must retain a State of Washington licensed architect or engineer).

### Design Wind Pressure:

$$P = C_e C_q Q_s L_w$$

Where

P = design wind pressure

C<sub>e</sub> = combined height, exposure, and gust factor coefficient as given in Uniform Building Code (UBC) Table 16-G

C<sub>q</sub> = pressure coefficient for the structure or portion of structure under consideration as given in UBC Table 16-H

Q<sub>s</sub> = wind stagnation pressure at the standard height of 33 feet as set forth in UBC Table 16-F

L<sub>w</sub> = importance factor as set forth in UBC Table 16-H

Depth of embedment required to resist lateral loads (where there is no constraint provided at the ground surface such as rigid floor or surface pavement):

$$d = A/2 (1 + \sqrt{1 + 4.36h/A})$$

Where

A = 2.34 P/S<sub>1</sub>b

b = diameter (in feet) of round post or footing or diagonal dimension of square post or footing

d = depth of embedment in earth in feet but not over 12 feet for the purpose of computing lateral pressure

h = distance in feet from ground surface to point of application of "P"

P = applied lateral force in pounds

S<sub>1</sub> = allowable lateral soil-bearing pressure as set forth in Uniform Building Code Table 18-I-A based on a depth of one third the depth of embedment

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# Uniform Sign Code & Uniform Building Code Issues, cont'd

## Nonstructural Issues

### *Restriction on Combustible Materials*

Ground signs may be constructed of any material meeting the requirements of the Uniform Sign Code.

Combination signs, roof signs, wall signs, projecting signs, and signs on marquees shall be constructed of noncombustible materials (for exceptions, see the Uniform Sign Code, Section 402.4).

### *Display Surfaces*

Display surfaces of signs may be made of metal, glass or approved plastics (CC1 or CC2).

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**Information in this brochure is intended to help people to use, but not to replace, City codes. The applicant is still responsible for complying with all aspects of the Uniform Building Code, Uniform Sign Code, and Zoning Code applicable to signs.**

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